

National Gambling.

Gambling has become a large part of American commercial life. The bread and meat we eat, the corn we feed our stock, the clothes with which we cover ourselves as well as the investments we make are all affected by the wholesale gambling that permeates every part of this nation. One great reason why England has developed the wheat production in India, Australia and New Zealand to the extent she has is to be found in the American manipulation of the price of grain and the corners which take advantage of every untoward circumstance to speculate upon the necessities of the people. The grain corners of 1881-2, which sent wheat up to \$1.35 in Chicago, drove the shipping away from New York and led English importers to seek cargoes elsewhere, and whoever will watch the markets closely will see that the operations of the bulls and bears of Chicago daily affect the export of grain.

Cotton speculation in the South is what wheat speculation is in the West. Fortunately, however, foreign trade in cotton is simply deferred by corners, and is not permanently lost as in the case with wheat. Yet so disastrous to our manufacturing interests were the cotton corners of 1882 that many mills had to close or work on part time, and although machinery was as perfect and wages as low in this country as in Manchester, exports of cotton cloth for that year showed an actual falling off.

Petroleum speculation is always rife in Pennsylvania and its adjacent States, the pipe line certificates acting as the efficient medium of exchange. The rapidity with which old districts cease to yield and new districts are discovered, make oil one of the choicest of speculative commodities, and the sales often amount to many times the actual production.

The stock market is a peculiar field for speculation, but so completely are stocks controlled by a few strong operators, that when Gould and Vanderbilt are quiet small speculators are perforce idle, and prefer to seek other and more fluctuating markets.

The love of speculation is confined to no one class of persons; the country vies with the city; the farmer and the bank cashier have their margins lumped in the same deposit, and the doors of the bucket shops are wide open to those who must have their little deals on the way to and from meals. The Italian exhausts his mania for gambling on government lotteries. In America we try to suppress the lotteries which simply take money from the fool and give it to the sharper, but we are powerless to reach the gambling which is destructive alike of private morals and national progress.—*Detroit Times*.

Game for Gourmands.

Five thousand cats are said to have been eaten in Paris during the last siege. According to the same authority the cat is downright good eating. A young one, well cooked, is better than hare or rabbit. It tastes something like the American gray squirrel, but is even tenderer and sweeter. One thousand two hundred dogs, it is stated, were eaten in Paris during the late siege, and the flesh fetched from two to three francs per pound. According to Pliny, puppies were regarded as a great delicacy by the Roman gourmands.

The bear supplies food to several nations of Europe, and its hams are considered excellent. The flesh of the brown or black bear, which is eaten by the common people of Norway, Russia and Poland, is difficult of digestion and is generally salted and dried before it is used. Two bears were eaten in Paris during the siege, and the flesh was supposed to taste like pig. The Indian tribes of the interior of Oregon eat bears. The hedge-hog is considered a princely dish in Barbary, and is eaten in Spain and Germany. It is frequently eaten by the sick among the African Arabs from the belief that the flesh is medicinal. Mice and rats are eaten in Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand and considered delicate morsels. The taste of rats is considered to be something like that of birds. The Chinese eat them, and to the Esquimaux epicures the mouse is a real *bonne bouche*. Rats and mice were eaten in Paris during the siege.

The porcupine is reckoned delicious food in America and India, and resembles sucking pig. The Dutch and the Hottentots are fond of it, and it is frequently brought to table at the Cape of Good Hope. The squirrel is eaten by the natives of Australia, the North American Indians, and is a favorite dish in Sweden and Norway. The flesh is tender and said to resemble that of the barn-yard fowl. It is sometimes eaten by the lower classes in England and the United States, and it is said to make excellent pies. The flesh of the beaver is much prized by the Indians and Canadian traders, especially when it has been roasted in the skin after the hair has been singed off.—*London Society*.

The Blacksmith's Broken Weight.

The following old but interesting problem, may be new to many of our readers: A blacksmith had a stone weighing forty pounds, which he used as a weight. A teamster driving by one day broke it into four pieces. Said the blacksmith: "You have spoiled my weight." "No," replied the other, "where before you could only weigh forty pounds you can now weigh any number of pounds from one to forty without using the same stone twice." What was the weight of each piece? The answer is 1, 3, 9 and 27 pounds.

The son of an American minister or consul, although born abroad, is eligible to the Presidency of the United States.

The Philadelphia *Call* thinks hens are like highway robbers, because they "lay" for men.

HUMOROUS SKETCHES.

Necessary Production.

"My dear," said the czar of Russia to his wife, "will you give orders to have the palace gates locked and the streets for one mile in every direction cleared of people?" "Certainly," replied the czarina; "but what are you going to do?" "I want to look out of the window to see what kind of a day it is."—*Philadelphia Call*.

Wanted It Renewed.

An old gentleman went into one of our prominent insurance agencies last week, when the following transpired, after tossing a paper on the counter:

"That's run out and I want to get it renewed."

The clerk unfolded the document and with a smile inquired:

"Are you quite sure that this paper which you have just laid down here has run out?"

"Oh, yes," said the old gentleman; "my wife told me it ran out yesterday morning."

"Well, I am very sorry for you," said the good-natured clerk, at the same time casting a sly glance around the room and handing the paper back, "we are not taking these kind of risks now."

It was his marriage certificate.—*Buffalo Times*.

Not for Honesty.

"How would you like to have some fun?" asked the groceryman of the bad boy; "I have got a big pile of potatoes in the cellar, and they are beginning to sprout. Let's you and I go down cellar and pull off our coats and just have a glorious old time picking those potatoes over and pulling off the sprouts. Hurrah! Come on," and the groceryman laughed and ran his thumb into the boy's ribs and started for the cellar.

"No, not any fun for honesty," said the boy, as he looked out to see if his pa was in sight. "I think too much fun is not good for boys. If you want your potatoes looked over you will have to hire somebody to do it. Sprouting potatoes is work, and you can't make it pass for fun, unless you strike some fool boy that don't know you are playing it on him. You old hypocrites think boys are fools. Ever since I turned grindstone for a man once all the afternoon for fun, and got so tired I couldn't walk, I have decided to pick out my own fun. When a man unfolds a scheme to me to have fun, and I see it is a put up job to get me to work for nothing and call it fun, I pass," and the boy went out to see if his pa had got off the car.—*Peck's Sun*.

Creating a Run on the Bank.

A private banker in a town in Wisconsin received a call a few days ago from a stranger, who deposited ten dollars, and then turned around and asked the banker for a loan of fifty dollars.

"Why, sir, I can't lend you any money," replied the banker.

"I think you can. Please take time for reflection."

"I don't want to reflect upon the subject, sir."

"Would a run on this bank damage you fifty dollars' worth?"

"There will be no run here."

"Suppose there was?"

"It is too absurd to suppose. Good-day, sir!"

The stranger walked out-doors, and the bank closed for the day. He entered a grocery and stated that he was a depositor, and asked if the bank was sound. He entered a dry-goods store and inquired if the hard times might not pinch the bank. He entered a drug-store and offered his certificate of deposit for ten dollars. He met a lawyer and inquired if a receiver had been appointed to look out for the interests of depositors. Next morning he was at the door of the bank, gesticulating and lamenting, and behind him were seventy-five or eighty citizens. Before noon the bank was cleaned out and its doors closed, and an ex-private banker was skipping out to avoid being lynched.—*Wall Street News*.

Boomerang's Boomerang.

Mr. Hankinson-Boomerang recently made up his mind that he had lost a sufficient number of articles by throwing them at cats in the back yard. So he determined to obviate that by using his boomerang altogether, and fastening a rope to it, in order to be able to pull it back to throw it again. About two nights ago a tomat set up an aria, and Mr. Hankinson-Boomerang opened the window softly and looked for the cat, which mistook he soon discovered perched serenely on the fence at the back end of the yard. Fearing that the rope might fly out into the yard, he wound the end of it around his left hand and took the boomerang in his right. Taking a step or two toward the window, he let the boomerang go as hard as he could. About twenty feet from the window-sill the boomerang had traveled as far as it possibly could, and it had been so swiftly thrown that before Mr. Hankinson-Boomerang could let go of the rope to save himself, he was lifted off his feet and sent shooting on after the boomerang. And when he landed in an empty ash-basel, and shot so far down it that his feet were just opposite his eyes, and the cat came up as though to ask him what was the matter, his looks seemed to indicate the fact that if he ever again made a similar attempt at boomerang-throwing, he would first tie the rope to the bureau.—*Puck*.

A Leap-Year Episode.

There was a party across the river the other night. Toward the close she slipped to his side and sweetly asked:

"Going home by yourself, Charlie?"

"Guess so," he replied.

"Would you like some one to see you home?"

"Depends on who it is." His answers were very short and crusty. Many a one

would have been disheartened, but Lucy was not of that kind. She still persevered:

"Some young lady, I mean."

"Depends on who the young lady is," said the brute.

"Some one about my size," persisted the angel.

"There are several here about your size."

"There's only one exactly my size."

"See here, Lucy," said Charlie, "if you want to take me home you may."

"Oh!" she replied, "I've no particular desire to take you home, but as I was going your way I thought—"

"He interrupted her with an "All right" and together they left.

He was leaning on her arm, and silently they meandered over the frozen streets. They stopped at his door. He invited her in.

"No, Charlie, I won't go in, but I want to tell you something."

By the light of the street lamp on the corner Charlie's face was seen to grow pale as she continued:

"I am abundantly able to support a husband. I have a bank account of a good size. I love you, Charlie, and can give you a good home. Will you be mine, dearest?"

"Lucy," gasped the brute, "you've no idea what it takes to support a husband—"

She interrupted him.

"Darling, if it should be necessary, I would work from morning until night, and even take in washing and sewing; you shall want for nothing. Only say you will be mine."

"No, Lucy, it cannot be, I shall always love you as a brother, watch over your pathway through life, and should you stand in need of advice or assistance, you can rely on my willingness to assist you; but I can never marry you."

"Then you refuse me?"

"Yes."

"Base wretch!" she exclaimed, "you will live to repent your hasty decision, for to-morrow my dead body will be found in the cold waters of the river."

And, clasping him in her arms in one convulsive embrace, she fled into the outer darkness.—*Oil City Derrick*.

Snow Bucking.

The description of a turn of snow working which the writer took an active part in a few winters ago, applies, says Angus St. Clair in the *American Machinist*, with some modifications, to all operations of this kind as usually pursued on Northwestern railroads. A division was badly snowed up, and two engines started out with a large plow to work toward others similarly engaged. We took along car accommodation for a gang of shovelers and a supply of coal for three engines. The first serious obstacle we reached was a cutting about a quarter of a mile long, filled with snow to the top of the snow fences, the average depth being about ten or twelve feet. The shovelers were put to work cutting a straight face on the snow bank for the plow to strike upon, and deep trenches were cut on the surface of the snow at right angles to the track. We then backed with the two engines about a mile, to take a good run. In running at the bank the engines are worked to reach their highest possible speed. Just before striking the snow the links are dropped to full gear so that the engines will exert their full tractive force in advancing along the snow. Plunging into a solid looking snow bank that reaches nearly to the top of the smokestack, tries the nerve of an engineer. But it is like jumping into a cold bath; hesitating on the brink is the uncomfortable part. So soon as the plow touches the snow bank a dense cloud envelops the engine, which makes the cab as dark as the heart of a tunnel. In doing his work the engineer must now depend entirely upon his hearing, unaided by the tumult of noises that accompany the engine's entrance among the frozen masses. Lumps of ice and huge cakes of snow thunder on top and sides of the cab; steam hisses and crackles from the hot surfaces being hugged by the densely packed snow; a whirl of slipping wheels makes every joint of the engine groan and clatter, but the engineer must grasp the throttle undisturbed by the dismal uproar. He must not be appalled by violent slipping, or attempt to check it unless the engine is working water in a way to endanger the cylinders. This his trained ear can detect amidst the other noises. By the exhaust he can tell the moment the engine has ceased to move ahead, and he immediately reverses and tries to back out. Sometimes snow is packed so firmly over the motion that the engine can not be reversed till it is shoveled out.

Those on the ground watching the effect of the run see the immense masses of snow thrown out into the fields, the rapid speed is converted into a confusion of noises and snow missiles, then almost instantly the flying avalanche stops. But the plow has cut a swath nearly 300 feet long. The workmen at once swarm round the plow and engines and shovel out the snow imbedded round the wheels and running gear. When the hind engine is got out the track is cleaned out and the free engine helps to pull out that which has the plow attached. While the resurrecting of the engine is going on snow is shoveled into the tenders and melted, the injectors being used as heaters. As soon as both engines get out of the snow they are ready for another run, and the same cycle of work goes on till the obstruction is overcome. Where the snow is lighter the engines will generally get through without stalling. They were also able to back out without shoveling where the body of snow is not overwhelmingly heavy.

A pearl weighing nearly 200 grains has lately been found on the line of the Panama canal. It will be called the Lesseps.

FARM AND

Success With

The greatest difficulty in success with poultry is the want of proper sanitary precautions. A pure air, perfect water, and moderate feeding are indispensable.

Poultry can be kept as healthy as any other animal. But it is only the experienced poultry-keepers, who have learned by many failures how to avoid failures, that can keep fowls profitably. Bad advice and ignorant suggestions, however, lead the inexperienced into loss and trouble. For instance, among the numerous circulars and pamphlets, and which are just now coming down like snow-flakes from every quarter, I get one from a dealer in poultry-fixings of all kinds. Among others there is a nice little poultry-house, a pocket edition, as it were, called an improved portable poultry-house. It is excellent for its improved portability, but that is all; for use it is worse than useless. The sizes given are four by four for twelve fowls, five by five for twenty, and six by six for forty. This gives from one to one and a quarter square feet for each fowl on the floor, including fancy nest-boxes for the eggs, which, under these circumstances, will be apt to be empty. Now, a flock to be healthy and clean, and consequently free from vermin, should have at least five or six square feet of floor space for each fowl. One square foot gives hardly space enough for the vermin to gather in such a small house, and it is very certain that fowls kept in so confined a space will be wholly crowded out by lice and fleas and mites, until they die miserably of cholera or roup, or pure rot from uncleanliness.—*New York Times*.

Farm and Garden Notes.

Do not plow heavy soils while the ground is filled with water.

Put small lots of beans in a sack to thresh them. It is a little hard on the bags, perhaps, but your beans are not scattered all over the barn floor.

The Jersey red breed of swine are not so liable to disease as the white varieties. Despite their great slowness in maturing, they are great favorites at the West.

A girl of strong green tree is said to be a specific for sheep poisoned by eating laurel. A farmer who has used this remedy many years says he has saved hundreds of sheep by it.

It is safer for the farmer to prune his trees a little every year than to prune irregularly when heavy cutting will have to be done. Yearly pruning is the easier and cheaper method.

Lime and salt will destroy slugs, and the yard should have some quicklime (finely powdered) spread over it. Two or three applications would destroy all existing, but without thorough drainage they would return after a time.

Horses often suffer from neglect of proper shoeing during the busy season. Whatever may be said in favor of not shoeing horses, it is certain that most horses which have been accustomed to be shod will be lamed if driven long or far without protection to their feet.

Eight drops of tincture of aconite, dropped on a piece of bread and mixed with the food at night, and the next morning four drops given in the same manner, is recommended by Doctor J. R. Nichols, of the Massachusetts board of agriculture, as a remedy for garget.

Stable manure is often spoken of as the standard fertilizer and a complete manure to itself. It is probably so for corn, but for wheat and other small grains phosphate of lime is usually needed, and on sandy soil potash. This is shown by the fact that manure alone creates a heavy growth of straw without proportionate increase of grain.

Keep a lump of rock salt in the feed box of each horse. Serve the cows that are stall fed in the same way. A board on which some coarse salt has been sprinkled may be placed in the yard or field in which cows are turned for exercise. Do not forget pigs and sheep. Give the former in addition a little powdered charcoal. This is essential to their health.

Farmers cannot be too particular in examining grass seeds to see that no weed seeds are mixed with them. The wild carrot and plantain are more likely to be found in clover seed, but a sharp eye and a good microscope will enable the farmer to detect their presence. Seeds that contain these weeds should not be sown, even if the land remains unseeded.

An exchange suggests that if farmers would go to the barn on a wet day and spend their time in making an eaves trough for the barn or stable, and thereby carry away the drip which would otherwise fall on the manure pile, causing a waste of the elements of plant food contained therein, they would make more money that day than they could any fine day in the field.

The *American Dairymen* says there is one point that should be deeply impressed upon the dairyman's mind, and that is, if he wants to make a first-class article of butter he must churn often. Never let the cream get over three days old, no matter how cold it may be kept. If cold, it will get old, fat and frinky. If sour, the whey will eat up the best butter globules. Churn as often as you can.

The *Southern Planter* asserts that "a growing, living tree robs the soil of water, and, to some extent, of fertility, for a wide distance. This is distinctly seen in fields devoted to hoed crops. It is scarcely possible to manure highly enough to bring corn or potatoes under or near trees to the average in other parts of the field. Butternut or hickory are especially injurious to hoed crops near them, possibly because the wash from their leaves positively injures the soil."

will do three in a day. The top of a bag at three or three, but if these plants are should be sown.

Every farmer should possess a stencil-plate with his name and residence cut in it, so that he may plainly mark all bags, blankets, robes and boxes with it; also a brand with which he can burn his name into the handles of hoes, shovels and other tools. Then if he is blessed with a borrowing neighbor the sight of the name may remind the borrower to return the tool before he has worn it out. At least there will be less danger of his thinking he owns it because he has had it so long that he has forgotten how he came by it.

The *Dairy* says that sulphurous acid is a most effective antiseptic and antiferment, and may be produced by burning sulphur upon live coals upon a shovel or a bed of coals carried into a stable with perfect safety. It will also be found an excellent method for freeing dairy rooms and cellars from the spores of mildew, which have a very injurious effect upon the milk and upon butter or cheese made from milk that has been exposed to them. In fact, from constant prevalence of these spores it might be useful to make a practice of fumigating dairies occasionally, especially after a bad damp spell of weather during the summer season.

Household Hints.

A little soap or lard applied to the hinges or doors will prevent the creaking.

To prevent flat-irons from rusting warm them, then rub with new and clean white wax. Put again to the fire till they have soaked in the wax. When done rub over with a piece of serge.

For stains for floor, use one or two coats of linseed oil, raw or boiled; when quite dry, a coat of good oak varnish. This does not hide the grain of the wood and produces a good dark brown.

To clean handles of knives, rub salts of lemon into the handles with a piece of soft flannel dampened with warm water. Afterwards well rinse the handle with cold water and wipe dry. Salts of lemon are poisonous, so care must be taken.

The best way of freshening up artificial flowers is to pull them out when they require it daintily with the finger, breathe on them, and where there are wax leaves that are bent out of shape, hold them for a second or two to the fire.

To solder tortoise-shell bring the edges of the pieces of shell to fit each other, giving the same inclination of grain to each, then secure them in a piece of paper and place them between hot pinners; apply pressure and let them cool. The heat must not be so great as to burn the shell.

Penguins on the Falkland Islands.

The breeding-grounds or "rookeries" of the penguins are generally situated in the shelter of some land-locked bay or break in the line of steep and rugged cliffs; and often occupy several acres, which are laid out, leveled, and divided into squares with intervening streets, the whole as if done at the dictation of a surveyor. Along these streets the penguins gravely waddle on their way to and from the water, presenting the appearance of squads of awkward recruits, or a still more striking likeness as has been often remarked, to troops of little children toddling along in their white pinafores. They build no nests; but lay a single egg in some selected spot, the incubation being equally shared by male and female. Although so closely allied to the feathered kind, they are unable to fly, nature having only furnished them with short stumpy apologies for wings, resembling the flippers of a turtle, by means of which they are enabled to attain prodigious speed, when diving under water in pursuit of fish for food. Penguins as well as seals, are doubly provided against the cold of the high latitudes which they frequent, by a layer of fat immediately inside the skin, which is also the depository of the oil extracted by the fisherman. In landing to attack and slaughter them in their rookeries with clubs and boat-stretchers, steady precautions are unnecessary, the poor dumb creatures looking on in a state of indifferent stupidity, without making any attempt to escape, while their companions are being knocked on the head all around them. Seal hunting, or "fishing," as it is usually termed, on the contrary, requires great skill and patience. Seals are gregarious as well as polygamous, and when they forsake the open seas for their breeding places on shore, they are shy of intrusion, and take great care to insure the safety of their retirement, particularly in localities which have been previously visited by human beings. They invariably post sentinels on every commanding point, so that only by patient waiting and under cover of night the hunters are enabled to elude their vigilance and surprise them.—*Chambers' Journal*.

Philosophy of Bread and Butter.

We spread butter upon bread because that is the best way of eating both bread and butter, and they are both good when of first-class quality. Our palates revolt at butter straight, but when united with the bread it renders the latter less absorbent of moisture, and, therefore, less dry in the mouth, and lubricates its passage to the stomach, making the eating of it an easy and pleasant process, whereas dry bread is hard to take, and is specially reserved as a primitive diet for unruly convicts and naughty children.—*Philadelphia Press*.